

June 18, 2009

Dear Camper Charlene,

I was just deleting old emails and I came across one where DA/Mike says that you're flying out to camp in Washington State on June 18 which is today. I thought it was June 17. Also, two friends, both named "Celia" (or Cecelia) are going with you and they've been to the camp before. This is nice to have friends along. Remember, I always had my twin, Patti, with me at camp except my last experience as a counselor after my first year of college. Anyway, I wonder how you keep your Celia friends straight. I picture both of their heads twirling around when you call their name(s). Maybe you call one of them #1 and the other, #2.

Of course that probably wouldn't work very well because everyone wants to be #1. In fact, your great granddad, Alan Douglas Blackledge (dad of Barbara, Patti, Penny, Mike and Pete) used to do that with his sons, Mike and Pete. Mike was born first, so Daddy often referred to him as, "my number one son". This made Pete the "number two son." Hmmmmm. How do you think that made Pete feel?

For some reason Daddy didn't "number" his girls. Maybe girls just weren't worth numbering. Horrors. When I grew up and got married and had two sons of my own (your cousins once removed: Andy and Nick), my husband Fred and I agreed that NO ONE would be number anything. It worked out very well. I hope both our sons consider themselves as #1. You've probably heard of George Foreman, a famous boxer of yesteryear. Believe it or not, George named ALL of his SIX sons, "George." This is true. Compared to that, having two Celia's for friends probably isn't too much of a hassle after all.

I loved going to camp so much every summer that during the summer after my freshman year in college (age 18), I decided to get a job as a camp counselor for six weeks. The camp was Camp Mystic and located in Hunt, Texas. Our family was then living in Houston, Texas because our dad had retired from the Navy and was then working for Cameron Iron Works as a vice president. I went to high school and college in Houston. My dad was very gregarious and did a lot of PR (public relations) work for Cameron.

I think both Mike/DA and Pete turned out to be gregarious, too. Anyway, I had cute campers in my cabin at Camp Mystic. The oddest thing these 10 year olds did was to write home and ask to be sent pickles. Everyone soon got jars of pickles in the mail and they began having contests in the cabin during rest hour as to who could drink the most pickle juice. Can you imagine the UGHS, puckering and face squinching?